

Chapter 162: Keep it Up

The fight between Yun Ming and the mysterious assailant continued to rage on. Li Lang was still separated from the chaos by the colossal earthen wall the enemy had conjured. Time was ticking. Every second that passed by was priceless as Yun Ming struggled to keep his foe at bay.

The difference in power between an early-stage and middle-stage Foundation Establishment cultivator could not be understated. The only reason Yun Ming was still holding his own was because he specialized in close-range combat, while his opponent didn't. However, he had to stick close to Yun Ming in order to keep him confined. Otherwise, it allowed for too many opportunities to escape.

Hmm, if only I could get this cicada Qi beast to listen to my commands. It's just sitting there right now.

Determined to help, Li Lang quickly retrieved several items from his space ring.

He knew his first objective was to rendezvous with Yun Ming, and the main obstacle to that wasn't the wall before him, but the attacker himself. He was fighting while shutting down any of Yun Ming's attempts at approaching Li Lang and his mount.

The only offensive talismans I have are explosive ones, but they are only Mortal-grade. And I'll need to get in range for them to even serve as a distraction...

Another loud impact sound rang out from the other side of the barrier as if to urge Li Lang to make his move quickly.

Fine, let's do this. It does more harm than good if I just sit around indecisively here.

Taking a deep breath, Li Lang activated another concealment talisman and began to scale his way up the wall. He took out the two large needles he used for his Gossamer Knife Dance technique and used them as ice picks. Empowered by his Qi, it had no problem digging deep into the wall despite Li Lang's strength. After all, the only reason Yun Ming had trouble getting through it was due to the active intervention of his opponent.

Very soon, he made it to the top, where he got a clear view of the fighting below. They moved at speeds that were hard for him to keep track of, but Li Lang could at least read the general direction of the fight.

Having realized he wouldn't be able to get away, Yun Ming had been working to close the distance, while his foe kited him around. Numerous rock spears were constantly being conjured and shot toward Yun Ming before they would be sliced apart. It resulted in a constant barrage of debris all over the area.

Without any other choice, Li Lang started scaling his way down into that chaos.

Unbeknownst to both Foundation Establishment cultivators, the young man got closer and closer. Li Lang got down in a prone position to avoid the debris and inched closer.

Finally, he grabbed a handful of talismans and threw them out.

Despite it having appeared from nowhere, they only traveled as fast as he could throw it, allowing the target to react. Their assailant instantly turned to the new objects entering the fray and only needed to spend a split second to recognize them as Mortal-grade talismans.

“Ha, so you couldn’t wait to join in on the fun? Come on now, do you really think these low-level talismans will even serve as a distraction?”

The man easily swatted away the talisman at the wave of his hand. The earth rose to form a small wall, intercepting its trajectory and causing explosions to rock the scene. However, he only formed a wall to intercept the talisman that was headed toward him. Several of them flew in a different direction, heading to Yun Ming instead.

It caused the assailant to sneer at the horrible aim Li Lang displayed. A moment later, another round of explosions rang out around Yun Ming as the talisman made contact.

“Ha, Energy Gatherers shouldn’t interfere in our fights. It’s way beyond you. Look, your attacks are even hitting your allies.”

The mysterious man’s delight only lasted for a moment when he suddenly realized his Qi senses had lost track of Yun Ming. He quickly scanned his surroundings, being on the lookout for any sudden attacks.

He then retrieved a talisman of his own from his space ring and threw it into the air while pointing two fingers at it.

“Break!”

At his beckoning, the talisman exploded into countless tiny motes of light, raining down as far as the eye could see. It quickly reached the ground level, where it then disappeared. The only exception was at a small area in front of the towering wall. The lights hovered in place before it exploded violently. It didn’t cause the wind to blow or any physical damage to that area, but it revealed the figure of two people in its place.

“Did a mighty Foundation Establishment expert as young as you really have to resort to running with your tails between your legs using the help of an Energy Gatherer? I was thinking of letting you go if you just ran away quietly, but now that you made me use a revealing talisman, that’s not going to happen. You better hope you have enough on you to compensate me, or I’ll make your death a painful one!”

Instead of replying, the two young cultivators quickly darted in two different directions. One went up the wall while the other headed straight for their attacker.

The assailant didn't even bother with Li Lang scaling the wall and resumed his cat-and-mouse dance with Yun Ming. He slammed a palm at the ground beneath him, causing the earth to soften to a mud-like state where Yun Ming was.

In response, he leaped high into the air and prepared to bring his sword down onto his foe.

The unknown man performed another swatting motion with his sword hand, making dozens of stone spears to pelt Yun Ming from his right side. Despite parrying the attacks, it pushed him off course.

"I was taking it easy on you so I could capture you alive, but I think I've changed my—"

Before the attacker could continue, he suddenly dove to the ground. However, it was too late. Two long needles had embedded their way into his shoulder. They were each as thick as a finger, causing the man to grunt out in pain.

"You and your slippery tricks! Be proud that you were able to draw my blood at—"

Once again, the man stopped mid-speech as he stumbled forward. Yun Ming didn't let this chance go and closed the distance in an instant. He slashed out with his sword, right at the man's neck. Just as the blade made contact with his skin, a layer of rock appeared out of nowhere. Thankfully, Yun Ming was able to overpower the makeshift defense, scattering blood over the scene.

The assailant's expression finally soured. He swiftly jumped back while pressing against his wound. While Yun Ming tried to press the attack, a combination of earthen walls and stone spears blocked his path.

Seeing this scene, both Li Lang and Yun Ming couldn't help but smile.

It worked!

He had handed off his poison needles to Yun Ming. They had discussed the plan in haste, but Yun Ming decided to put his trust in him. He happened to practice a Qi art that was similar to Li Lang's Gossamer Knife Dance, allowing him to control dozens of blades remotely. As Li Lang had suspected, it was Qi art with an affinity with metal, which meant it worked with his needles as well.

It allowed them to deliver cyanide into the assailant's system. As expected, it only worked for a split second due to the disparity in cultivation, but that was all they needed to create an opening. Having proven it worked once, the duo strove to repeat it again.

The cat-and-mouse chase between Yun Ming and the mysterious attacker resumed, but this time, it was in Yun Ming's favor. That was because the other party was injured and was attempting to eat a pill while dodging the attacks.

Having reached the top of the wall, Li Lang decided to join the fray as well. He sent his own needles at their common enemy, despite knowing he wasn't powerful enough to penetrate the defenses of a Foundation Establishment cultivator. He did so anyway, just to pressure their assailant even more.

He would have to pay more attention to what had once caught him off guard. At any moment in time, Yun Ming could take control of the needles Li Lang controlled, allowing them to have enough power to be a threat. That possibility forced him to defend against all needles headed his way.

Being pressed by numerous projectiles, the assailant was soon hit by another needle.

Yun Ming grinned as he moved in to do some damage, but his expression quickly changed to that of alarm. That was because his opponent reacted to his charge, even though he had been hit with another dosage of cyanide. The poison should've at least hindered his movements.

Having been caught off guard, Yun Ming was forced away, allowing the man to create adequate distance to consume a recovery pill. The duo was forced to watch on and reassess the situation.

"So it isn't as effective against a cultivator, after all," Li Lang muttered.

He knew, unlike Qi beast, intelligent cultivators must have had their own methods to deal with poisons. Still, seeing his creation turn useless so quickly made him frustrated.

"Li Lang!" Yun Ming cried out, "Keep it up!"

What? Keep going, even if he has found a way to neutralize it?